

LaBeauce proper i& certainly flat autl  
immol.tmmH, but Us  
confines are picturesque, and Douruuu, Aumniu,  
OrgiVvH, and  
other localities are associated historically with  
tht\* UomliUi  
crimes of the desperadoos known a.s *chauffeurs*,  
whu nuuutul  
the region early in tho nineteenth century, A  
Rtruiu of  
hrutishness was long to be observed among  
sumo of the. in-  
habitants. Withal, they are essentially  
Fmn-.h, that is of  
the borders of the Ilo do Prance, for there in no  
Hxiul typu of  
French peasant. Those of Provence, Languotlot',  
Burgundy,  
Normandy, Brittany, and other parts, all differ  
*twin* one  
another in important characteristics. Tim a  
genuruliMtitiony  
on the subject of the Prench peasantry may  
occasionally  
become ridiculous.

Nevertheless, at tho period selected for JJoln's  
work, tlmfc  
of the Second Empire, a general resemblance  
was to bu found  
among them in two respects. In tho first jilac-u  
their igno-  
rance was very great. The Imperial  
Government whtoh did  
a good deal to ameliorate their lot materially, did  
UH littlu tw  
possible to enlighten and elevate their niiutln.  
*Tlwy* wunt,  
so to say, the backbone of the *regime*, and their  
i^uoruticu  
was its safeguard. At the elections they werts  
Itul like sUwji  
to the polling places to vote for the official  
candidate. All  
that, however, belongs to the past. Many

olnwgUH lmv«  
occurred during the last thirty years, and  
without ontiiriug  
here into the question of the religious and  
secular Bohouln, it  
may be said that under the Third Republic  
inorw ||m b«\*cu  
done than at any previous time for the  
education of lh«  
peasantry. Some brutishness persists in  
variouH rogi»»«,  
but all who remember how widespread was  
illitoracy before  
the War of 1870 know that great improvement  
bus buoa  
effected.